

In the Claims:

Cancel, without prejudice, claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 17 - 19, and 22 - 29; amend claims 9, 20, and 21; and add new claims 30 - 44 as follows:

1 - 8 (cancelled).

9 (currently amended).      An apparatus for cutting an article of wood, comprising:

a ring assembly comprising two end plates for rotation about an axis of rotation;

at least two shoulder bolts, each of said shoulder bolts having a head portion of a first diameter, a shoulder portion of a second diameter less than said first diameter, and a threaded portion having a third diameter less than said second diameter, each said shoulder portion being disposed between the corresponding head and threaded portions; and

a plurality of knife assemblies, each assembly comprising an elongate knife having a cutting edge extending along an elongate axis, a clamp for clamping the knife, and a base for supporting at least a portion of said clamp, said assemblies for installation between said end plates such that the shoulder portions of said at least two shoulder bolts extend through

one of said end plates into said base, the threaded portions of said shoulder bolts being received in corresponding threaded holes in said base.

10 - 20 (cancelled).

20. (currently amended)      A knife assembly for a ring slicer, comprising:

a base;

a wearshoe;

at least one bolt for drawing mounting said wearshoe and base together along the axis of said bolt at one side of said base, for producing a mounted configuration of said wearshoe and base in which said wearshoe is mounted to said base; and

an upper clamping member for mounting engagement with said base at an opposite side of said base for clamping the knife between said upper clamping member and said wearshoe, wherein said wearshoe and said base include cooperatively interlocking portions ~~adapted to substantially prevent movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a first direction toward the knife and perpendicular to the axis of said bolt, said interlocking portions meeting so as to define an angle  $\phi$  with respect to said first direction that is in the range 45 - 60 degrees~~ configured to interlock in

said mounted configuration so as to resist separation of said base from said wearshoe along said axis.

21. (currently amended) A knife assembly for a ring slicer, comprising:

a base;

a wearshoe;

at least one bolt for drawing mounting said wearshoe and base together along the axis of said bolt at one side of said base, for producing a mounted configuration of said wearshoe and base in which said wearshoe is mounted to said base; and

an upper clamping member for mounting engagement with said base at an opposite side of said base for clamping the knife between said upper clamping member and said wearshoe at a location, wherein said wearshoe and said base include cooperatively ramping portions ~~adapted to substantially prevent movement of said base, relative to said wearshoe, in a first direction away from the knife and perpendicular to the axis of said bolt, said ramping portions meeting so as to define an angle  $\theta$  inclined with respect to said first direction about 5 degrees~~ that are sloped relative to said axis so as to resist sliding, in said mounted configuration, of said base relative to said wearshoe, away from said location.

22 - 29 (cancelled).

30 (new). The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the knife defines an elongate axis thereof, wherein said clamping defines an orientation of the elongate axis of the knife relative to the knife assembly, and wherein said ramping portions are sloped so as to define an angle  $\phi$  inclined about 5 degrees relative to a first direction, said first direction being defined in a plane perpendicular to said orientation, perpendicular to the axis of said bolt and directed away from said location.

31 (new). The apparatus of claim 30, wherein said base and wearshoe include cooperatively interlocking portions configured to interlock in said mounted configuration so as to resist separation of said base from said wearshoe along the axis of said bolt.

32 (new). The apparatus of claim 31, wherein said interlocking portions meet so as to define an angle  $\phi$  that is inclined about 45 - 60 degrees with respect to said first direction.

33 (new). The apparatus of claim 21, wherein said base and wearshoe include cooperatively interlocking portions configured to interlock in said mounted configuration so as to resist separation of said base from said wearshoe along the axis of said bolt.

34 (new). The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the knife defines an elongate axis thereof, wherein said clamping defines an orientation of the elongate axis of the knife relative to the knife assembly, and wherein said interlocking portions meet so as to define an angle  $\phi$  that is inclined

about 45 - 60 degrees with respect to a first direction, said first direction being defined in a plane perpendicular to said orientation, perpendicular to the axis of said bolt and directed away from said location.

35 (new). The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the knife defines an elongate axis thereof, wherein said clamping defines an orientation of the elongate axis of the knife relative to the knife assembly, and wherein said interlocking portions meet so as to define an angle  $\phi$  that is inclined about 45 - 60 degrees with respect to a first direction, said first direction being defined in a plane perpendicular to said orientation, perpendicular to the axis of said bolt and directed away from said location.

36 (new). The apparatus of claim 35, wherein said upper clamping member is adapted for mounting to said opposite side of said base such that a first portion of said upper clamping member extends cantilevered over a corresponding portion of said wearshoe, for receiving said knife therebetween in a configuration of the apparatus in which said knife is unclamped, the apparatus being further adapted for elastically bending said upper clamping member so as force said first portion against said knife, for clamping said knife in the apparatus.

37 (new). The apparatus of claim 34, wherein said upper clamping member is adapted for mounting to said opposite side of said base such that a first portion of said upper clamping member extends cantilevered over a corresponding portion of said wearshoe, for receiving said knife therebetween in a configuration of the apparatus in which said knife is unclamped, the

apparatus being further adapted for elastically bending said upper clamping member so as force said first portion against said knife, for clamping said knife in the apparatus.

38 (new). The apparatus of claim 33, wherein said upper clamping member is adapted for mounting to said opposite side of said base such that a first portion of said upper clamping member extends cantilevered over a corresponding portion of said wearshoe, for receiving said knife therebetween in a configuration of the apparatus in which said knife is unclamped, the apparatus being further adapted for elastically bending said upper clamping member so as force said first portion against said knife, for clamping said knife in the apparatus.

39 (new). The apparatus of claim 32, wherein said upper clamping member is adapted for mounting to said opposite side of said base such that a first portion of said upper clamping member extends cantilevered over a corresponding portion of said wearshoe, for receiving said knife therebetween in a configuration of the apparatus in which said knife is unclamped, the apparatus being further adapted for elastically bending said upper clamping member so as force said first portion against said knife, for clamping said knife in the apparatus.

40 (new). The apparatus of claim 31, wherein said upper clamping member is adapted for mounting to said opposite side of said base such that a first portion of said upper clamping member extends cantilevered over a corresponding portion of said wearshoe, for receiving said knife therebetween in a configuration of the apparatus in which said knife is unclamped, the

apparatus being further adapted for elastically bending said upper clamping member so as force said first portion against said knife, for clamping said knife in the apparatus.

41 (new). The apparatus of claim 30, wherein said upper clamping member is adapted for mounting to said opposite side of said base such that a first portion of said upper clamping member extends cantilevered over a corresponding portion of said wearshoe, for receiving said knife therebetween in a configuration of the apparatus in which said knife is unclamped, the apparatus being further adapted for elastically bending said upper clamping member so as force said first portion against said knife, for clamping said knife in the apparatus.

42 (new). The apparatus of claim 21, wherein said upper clamping member is adapted for mounting to said opposite side of said base such that a first portion of said upper clamping member extends cantilevered over a corresponding portion of said wearshoe, for receiving said knife therebetween in a configuration of the apparatus in which said knife is unclamped, the apparatus being further adapted for elastically bending said upper clamping member so as force said first portion against said knife, for clamping said knife in the apparatus.

43 (new). The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said upper clamping member is adapted for mounting to said opposite side of said base such that a first portion of said upper clamping member extends cantilevered over a corresponding portion of said wearshoe, for receiving said knife therebetween in a configuration of the apparatus in which said knife is unclamped, the

apparatus being further adapted for elastically bending said upper clamping member so as force said first portion against said knife, for clamping said knife in the apparatus.

44 (new). The apparatus of claim 9, wherein said upper clamping member is adapted for mounting to said opposite side of said base such that a first portion of said upper clamping member extends cantilevered over a corresponding portion of said wearshoe, for receiving said knife therebetween in a configuration of the apparatus in which said knife is unclamped, the apparatus being further adapted for elastically bending said upper clamping member so as force said first portion against said knife, for clamping said knife in the apparatus.